

Wilderness House Literary Review 14/4

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Hot Girls

IHATE THAT I SWEAT SO MUCH. Some guys think it's funny, and call me hot girl, but I don't think it's anything to laugh about. I have a medical condition that makes my hands and feet and armpits pour moisture.

I think about swallowing a knife sometimes because I can't live like this. I don't like people in school laughing at me because of my condition. When I go home from college on the weekends, and on summer break, I sit in my room and dream about what it would be like to not suffer so much. At school, I'm too busy trying to avoid situations where people will see my wet hands or smell my feet.

"Hey, hot girl," Jim said to me. He was in my Spanish class, and he liked to tease me.

"Don't call me that. I'm sick," I said.

"It's not bad to be a hot girl. You can be hot in more than one way." He laughed.

"Or I could be hot in only one way, the bad way."

"Why do you sweat so much?"

"I have a medical condition. It's called hyperhidrosis."

"So you're hyper?"

"It means hyper for more and hidrosis for water. Like extra water. I can't help it."

My college was not the best college. It's in the middle of nowhere, and it's an inexpensive school where people from the suburbs of Boston and Albany go. It's small, so the kids all know each other, and they're in everyone else's business. It's like high school because there are popular students and weirdos, jocks and nerds. We fit into categories here, too. I didn't like my school. I appreciated that I got away from home, but I was embarrassed that people knew my information, and I couldn't stand all the guys teasing me calling me the hot girl.

I had a hard time using a computer, because my hands were so sweaty. I also had a difficult time driving. Since my school was rural, I had to drive to get places. I had a crappy Ford Fiesta that had been my aunt's, but it was the only way I could get around.

I tried not to smoke too much pot, but it was so available I couldn't help it. Smoking kept my mind off my problems, like sweating too much and everyone calling me hot girl. I would smoke in the woods by myself. I walked to the mountain and sat beneath the trees. I listened to the birds and became jealous of them: they didn't have to worry about people laughing at them; they would just sing and find a mate. What an easy life being a bird! I wanted to fly away, and have feathers and not be sweaty.

I didn't do well in school because all I could think about was how everyone was looking at the sweat stains on my papers and notebooks. I

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knew that people probably had other things to do than look at my hands, but I was always convinced my classmates were mocking me.

The last day of spring semester, I packed up my car and started to drive home to the suburbs of Boston. It was a long ride home, and I had only done it once in the winter. My freshman year I didn't have a car. I was going alone.

I drove through the mountains toward the hairpin turn, the one that was infamous because it went over a cliff. I drove gingerly, gripping the steering wheel. I got nervous and my damp hand slipped and the car tipped over the turn.

I thought I was going to die! The front of my car hung over the cliff!

My hands grew sweatier as I gripped the wheel.

"Help!" I screamed. "Help me! I'm hanging over the hairpin turn!"

Someone at the nearby restaurant ran out, saw me, and called a fire truck. I heard sirens.

My heart pounded and sweat poured off my body.

The firefighters pulled my car off the cliff. When they pulled me out of my car, I fainted.

I woke up at the fire station. All the rural volunteer firefighters were sitting around, waiting for me to come to, anxious there was something wrong with me. I was sweating.

The firefighters called my mother and she came with her friend to Western Massachusetts, and they drove me home. I ate hamburgers and French fries with the firefighters while I waited. My car could be saved, but I decided I couldn't drive because I was too afraid.

My sweaty hands almost killed me. I didn't want to die. I was afraid for my life.

I decided to go to the doctor to see what they could do to help me. Pills, Botox, surgery, I would do whatever it took to get rid of this.

I didn't want to be a hot girl anymore.